

Amendments To The Claims

Claim 1 (presently amended): A mail decontamination method ~~for decontaminating the contents of a mailbag a~~ comprising the steps of:

~~sealing said mailbags so as to isolate~~ isolating the interior contents of said mailbag a flexible bag from gaseous communication with the ambient while the flexible bag is within a mailbag inside a public mailbox; ~~removing air from the interior of said mailbag; and~~ exhausting gas from the interior of the flexible bag to the exterior of the flexible bag through:

a first valve in the flexible bag; and

a filter;

determining the presence of a biohazard deposited in the filter by the exhausted gas and a decontaminate therefor; and

~~injecting a decontaminating material~~ introducing the decontaminate through a second valve in the flexible bag into the interior of the flexible bag ~~said mailbag.~~

Claim 2 (presently amended): The method as defined in Claim 1 wherein said biohazard is a microbe. ~~for decontaminating the contents of a mailbag according to claim 1 further comprising the step of testing the interior environment of the mailbag for the presence of hazardous material.~~

Claim 3 (presently amended): The method ~~for decontaminating the contents of a mailbag~~

~~according to claim 1 further comprising the step of waiting for a period sufficient to kill hazardous microbes present within said mailbag as defined in Claim 1, further comprising decontaminating the biohazard in the flexible bag with the decontaminate.~~

Claim 4 (presently amended): The method ~~for decontaminating the contents of a mailbag according to claim 1 further comprising the step of withdrawing said decontaminating material from the interior of said mailbag. as defined in Claim 3, further comprising exhausting gas from the interior of the flexible bag to the exterior of the flexible bag through the first valve after a predetermined time that is sufficient to decontaminate the biohazard.~~

Claim 5 (presently amended): The method ~~for decontaminating the contents of a mailbag according to claim 1 further comprising the step of drawing air from the interior of said mailbag across a filter, as defined in Claim 1, wherein the filter is removably attached to the first valve.~~

Claim 6 (new): The method as defined in Claim 1 wherein the decontaminate is selected from the group consisting of chlorine dioxide gas and potassium bromide gas.

Claim 7 (new): The method as defined in Claim 4, after the introducing of the decontaminate, further comprising neutralizing the decontaminate within the flexible bag.

Claim 8 (new):The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the exhausting gas further comprises:

forming a negative atmospheric pressure within the flexible bag; and
introducing gas, via a third valve in the flexible bag, into the negative atmospheric pressure of the flexible bag.

Claim 9 (new):The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein said isolating further comprises sealing the flexible bag with a resealable closure part of the flexible bag.

Claim 10 (new):The method as defined in Claim 9, wherein the resealable closure part of the flexible bag is a double sealing mechanism.

Claim 11 (new):The method as defined in Claim 9, wherein:
the resealable closure part of the flexible bag comprises mutually engaging ridges; and
the method further comprises engaging the mutually engaging ridges by pressure exerted upon same by a clamp translating the length of the mutually engaging ridges.

Claim 12 (new):The method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the engaging the mutually engaging ridges by pressure exerted upon same by a clamp translating the length of the mutually engaging ridges further comprises pulling the clamp with a cord.

Claim 13 (new): The method as defined in Claim 12, wherein the cord extends from the clamp to outside of the public mailbox.

Claim 14 (new): A method comprising:

- sealing the flexible bag with a resealable closure part of the flexible bag to isolate the interior of a flexible bag from gaseous communication with the ambient;
- forming a negative atmospheric pressure within the flexible bag by exhausting gas from the interior of the flexible bag to the exterior of the flexible bag through:
 - a first valve in the flexible bag; and
 - a filter;
- determining the presence of a biohazard deposited in the filter by the exhausted gas and a decontaminate therefore;
- introducing the decontaminate through a second valve in the flexible bag into the interior of the flexible bag;
- introducing gas, via a third valve in the flexible bag, into the negative atmospheric pressure of the flexible bag; and
- unsealing the flexible bag with the resealable closure part of the flexible bag for exposure to the ambient.

Claim 15 (new): The method as defined in Claim 14, prior to said unsealing the flexible

bag, further comprising neutralizing the decontaminate within the flexible bag.

Claim 16 (new): The method as defined in Claim 14, wherein:

the resealable closure part of the flexible bag comprises mutually engaging ridges; and

the method further comprises engaging the mutually engaging ridges by pressure exerted upon same by a clamp translating the length of the mutually engaging ridges.

Claim 17 (new): The method as defined in Claim 16, wherein the engaging the mutually engaging ridges by pressure exerted upon same by a clamp translating the length of the mutually engaging ridges further comprises pulling the clamp with a cord.

Claim 18 (new): The method as defined in Claim 17, wherein the cord extends from the clamp to outside of the public mailbox.

Claim 19 (new): A mail decontamination method comprising:

sealing the flexible bag with a plurality of sealing mechanisms integral to the flexible bag to isolate the interior of a flexible bag from gaseous communication with the ambient while the flexible bag is within a mailbag inside a public mailbox;

forming a negative atmospheric pressure within the flexible bag by exhausting gas from the interior of the flexible bag to the exterior of the flexible bag through:

a first valve in the flexible bag; and

a filter;

determining the presence of a biohazard deposited in the filter by the exhausted gas and a decontaminate therefor; and

introducing the decontaminate through a second valve in the flexible bag into the interior of the flexible bag;

introducing gas, via a third valve in the flexible bag, into the negative atmospheric pressure of the flexible bag; and

unsealing the plurality of sealing mechanisms for exposure to the ambient to provide access to any mail in the flexible bag.

Claim 20 (new): The method as defined in Claim 19, wherein:

each said sealing mechanism comprises mutually engaging ridges; and

the sealing comprises engaging the mutually engaging ridges of each said sealing mechanism by pressure exerted upon same by respective clamps translating the length of the mutually engaging ridges of each said sealing mechanism.